



News from Congressman

Tom Lantos

**12th Congressional District of California
San Mateo/San Francisco**

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Lantos Votes to Reverse Legislative Fiasco Endangering Taxpayer Privacy

Washington, DC – Congressman Tom Lantos (D-San Mateo/San Francisco) today voted to reverse a legislative provision jeopardizing taxpayer privacy that had been slipped unnoticed into a massive spending bill just before it came before the House for a vote last month.

“This outrageous provision nearly became law because the House Republican leadership once again rushed a piece of major legislation to vote just hours after it had been completed,” Lantos said.

“This is just the sort of thing that could have been caught if the leadership had been honoring House rules intended to ensure careful deliberation of all bills.

“We need to get back to basics and make sure the House follows its own rules,” Lantos said. “Some bad legislation was rushed to the House floor during this Congressional session, including the 600-page Medicare bill that closes the door to lower prescription drug prices, and it is important to ensure that sort of thing never happens again.”

The controversial provision was part of a 3,300-page, \$388 billion “omnibus” spending bill. It would have opened up individuals’ tax returns to certain members of Congress and their staffs who normally do not have such access. A Republican House staffer has taken responsibility for inserting the provision in the bill just hours before the House vote; a Democratic Senate staffer took note of the change, and the Senate insisted that the provision be removed.

Lantos has thrown his support behind an initiative by Congressman Brian Baird (D-WA) that would ensure that the leadership always allows three days for members to read and consider legislation before it comes to a vote.

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